

World of Sport

PICKS CLEVELAND TO WIN THE RACE

Jess Tannehill Likes the Make Up of Lajoie's Forest City Outfit - St. Louis Browns for Second.

"When I was in Cincinnati Frank Bancroft told me I had no idea how near I came to be a member of that team," said Jess Tannehill at Little Rock the other day. "Let me tell you," he continued, "others may have planned it, but at no time was there ever any chance for that to be brought about. I was not consulted about the matter at all, and it will perhaps save some people a whole lot of trouble to know that when I get through with the Boston club I want my unconditional release. Thank heaven, I am not dependent upon baseball for a living and can turn my hand to something else. What is more, even if I had been consulted I would not have stood for any trade. I am wholly in the dark as to the reason that induced any such trade, and it really matters little why it was attempted.

"What is my opinion of the race this year?

"Well, Cleveland looks to me to stand the best show of any of the clubs. First, the club appears to me to be stronger in pitchers than at any time since it was a member of the American League. Again, the club has a very fine trio of catchers. I know of no club that sizes up better in first-class backstops, good throwers and men that are able to hit the ball than Cleveland with Benis, Clarke and Wakefield. The last made a very good showing with Washington last season and ought to show to better advantage still in a faster club. Then I think that Cleveland will show up well in the outfield. The club will be better fortified in that department of the game than it has been in past seasons. The club is also very strong in the infield, and looking over the whole outfit I know of no better balanced aggregation than that of Cleveland.

"I know of no club that has been handicapped more incessantly by accident year after year than the Cleveland club. Yes, I know what you will say—accidents are part of the game. Yes, so they are; but there is also an element of luck in the game, and to my way of thinking Cleveland has had more than its share in that line. Some people have attributed the low stand of the club to inefficient management, but I think it is unfair to Lajoie to charge him for the failure of the club to land the pennant. I think he is a very efficient, hard working and painstaking manager, and I am sure that his greatest ambition in life is to land the world's championship for Cleveland, and I feel very positive he will do so some day.

"What club do I think will give him the most trouble?

Strength of the Browns.

"To tell you the truth, I think the St. Louis Browns will be very likely to do so. That club has also been strengthening and has some of the best material to be found in any club. Last season it was one of the strongest in the country in the pitching department. It is strong behind the bat and has probably the best outfield in the country. Stone certainly is a wonder—there isn't the least doubt in the world about that. He has a very fast companion in Hemphill, who has very few superiors, and I think they have added one of the best outfielders in the country in Pickering, with Columbus last season and formerly with the Athletics. Pickering is a batsman and always was, and they tell me that he has rid himself of the faults he had when he was with Connie Mack. Such a good judge as Joe Cantillon, the new manager of the Washington club, told me there was no better outfielder in the American association. McAleer has been trying hard to secure a man who would make well with Stone and Hemphill, and I think he has struck the combination.

Two Valuable Players.

"If Mac had succeeded in making the deal for Jimmy Collins he tried to put through he would have come very near having a club of championship caliber. I think that Collins will play as good ball as ever. They can talk about their third basemen, but there has been in baseball but one Collins, and really while there have been many first-class third basemen, there has been nobody in Collins' class when you combine ability to face the hottest of balls in the game, the knack of handling the most difficult of bunted balls and judgment in handling fly balls, combined with phenomenal throwing ability and the marvelous handling of thrown balls and putting the ball on a runner. Such a man could not be replaced, and it would take a very long time to find any one who can come near to replacing him. He certainly is a power in a club, and you well know where the Boston club was with him out of the game last season. "Right here you can say for me that I consider that the Browns have the best shortstop in the American League in 'Bobby' Wallace. Wallace has been handicapped in never having a man play alongside of him who could help him out, and if he had had such a man as Collins it would have helped his own game immensely and enabled him to shine a deal

more, and there isn't a shadow of a doubt about it. He is a wonder, and he goes about his work in the easiest fashion imaginable, making the most difficult plays seem easy. Perhaps he can't get the balls over to first base in rapid fashion! He certainly is the finished product and one of the best players the game ever produced, in the game all the time, always to be relied upon and never falling down in his work. He is a power in the club at all times.

"Do you think that your former associate, Jack Chesbro, will quit the game?"

Passing of the Spit Ball.

"I would not be in the least surprised. I heard that he intended to quit last season. Jack has a nice farm and a comfortable nest egg to fall back upon and is, therefore, in a position to get out of the game, and I guess he prefers to quit rather than wait to be asked to do so.

"The spit ball brought about the trouble with his arm. It was great while it lasted, but it was death in the end, and I am afraid it will be that way with a lot of pitchers who persist in its use. None of it for me. I would prefer to go down and out labeled n. g. than to be obliged to have recourse to that kind of delivery to keep me in the game, for the reason that I believe it is a very harmful kind of delivery and you will find that very few have retained it. There are some who owe their presence in major league ball to their success with this method of delivery, but they are very few, and I advise all young pitchers against it.

"I was very much surprised that some major league club did not secure Harry Ambuster, the outfielder with the Athletics of Philadelphia last season, for I considered him about as good young blood as I saw during the campaign. To my mind he is a great deal better than a lot who have been retained. He is a mighty good batsman and a quick fielder and a fast man on the bases. Somehow Mack is very successful in letting his men go. Here is a player I predict will be back again in fast company next season. To my mind the Boston club would have made a tenstrike had it secured that player, and I think he would have made a mighty good man for them. I do not wonder in the least that Armour of Toledo is tickled immensely over his success in landing this player from the American League, and you can wager this boy will make good for his manager and be one of the best cards on the circuit or I miss my guess."

HIS FACE HAD HEALED.

Why McPhee Wasn't Recognized by Sam Crawford.

Big Sam Crawford of the Detroit club was formerly a barber and worked at his trade until he was signed by Cincinnati. He has a breezy western way about him, and is one of the most confident ball players in the profession. When the Cincinnati management sent the famous old second baseman, "Bid" McPhee, out to Sam's home in Nebraska to get his signature to a contract "Bid" found Sam hard at work stropping a razor when he entered the shop. Without disclosing his identity McPhee climbed up in a chair and called for a shave. After Sam had carefully smeared on the lather and was preparing to wield the razor, McPhee, who is a bit nervous with new barbers, inquired as to whether Sam was in the habit of cutting any of the shop's patrons.

"Oh, sometimes we cut 'em," replied Sam, "although its dinged expensive, as the boss makes us pay 15 cents for every one we draw the blood from, and 25 cents if it's a deep cut. But"—and here Sam gave his trousers a sailor's hitch as he got ready to go to work on "Bid"—"I don't care a darn today as I just won a \$2 bet."

A few weeks afterward, when Sam arrived at Cincinnati, McPhee went out on the field to shake hands with him, and Sam, looking at "Bid" in a half-puzzled manner, said: "I don't seem to recognize your face, mister."

"I didn't suppose you would," shot back McPhee, "because it's all healed up now."

Close Call for Charley Hemphill.

"Talking about hotels," remarked Charley Hemphill, "did you ever hear why the Cleveland club quit the hotel in New Orleans in the spring of 1902? I was a Cleveland player then, you know, and we were stopping at the D—. Well, the food was nothing to brag of, but we might have stuck it out had it not been for something that happened to me one morning. I was up bright and early one morning and bought a paper at the hotel newsstand, paying my nickel all right. When I finished reading it I passed the paper back so the boy could sell it over again. As I started away from the stand the proprietor of the hotel grabbed me by the shoulder and yelled: 'Don't you know that that does not go here?'

"What's that?" I asked.

"Oh, I caught you all right, reading a paper and laying it back," was his answer.

"I paid for that paper," I told him.

"No you didn't," he shouted.

"So I came back at him by telling him that he was a liar, and I did not have the words out of my mouth before he grabbed a gun out of his pocket and, putting it up to my ear, told me he was going to kill me. Well, that gun looked as big as a cannon to me and I never said a word, but thought of all these hits I was going to miss getting that season.

"He backed me up against the wall, but he never took that gun away until I said that I had not paid for the paper and that I would get out of the hotel that day. Then he told Armour to get me away or he would kill me on sight. I was hitting pretty

well in practice, and as Zara Harvey had a bad stomach and Jack McCarthy a bad leg, Bill thought he might need me, so the whole team moved. But never in my life did I get such a scare as I did that time. It's a wonder my hair did not turn white."

BASEBALL NOTES.

"Wid" Conroy will not join the Highlanders for a week, as his wife is sick.

"Silk" O'Loughlin is taking five-mile runs to improve his voice. He says anything that helps his lungs helps his voice, and his voice is his stock in trade. "Silk" needs no elbow grease to help out his voice.

New Orleans has a squad of twenty-four players awaiting the invasion of the Crescent City by the big league teams.

Some insurance concerns have refused to insure baseball players in view of the frequency of serious railroad accidents of late. One company has just issued an ultimatum to this effect to the Cincinnati.

Gus Weyhing, the lanky pitcher formerly of the Athletics and Washingtons, has at last retired. He has opened a saloon at the corner of Walnut and Wenzel streets, in Louisville, Ky. He calls his wet goods store the "Home Plate Exchange."

Big Tim Jordan, the Superbas' first baseman, who is refusing to sign unless he gets a \$3,000 salary, says it's a mistake to try to clout the ball off the lot when you're battling a southpaw delivery. "Don't swing at the ball when you face a left-hander," says Tim. "Just chop it and you'll get the best of their delivery in the long run."

Outfielder Ben Caffyn, who played in thirty games for Cleveland last year, batting .195 and fielding .509, will play in Akron, Ohio, this season. This arrangement is supposed to be part of the deal by which Pitcher "Buff" Eshman has been reclaimed from Akron to go to Macon with the Naps. Akron is in the Ohio and Pennsylvania League.

Sugar Glen Liebhard, who came early last spring unheralded, unannounced and with a sad record of a season bereft of triumph, won his title to "Iron Man," "Baron" and "Iron Chancellor." He was sold to Cleveland. Just five years previous to Liebhard's arrival came Robert Rhoades. He developed here with Chas. Frank's team. Both pitchers are now valued members of Larry Lajoie's Clevelanders. Both were "made in Memphis."—Memphis Appeal.

"Lemme see," he ruminated, "three seasons ago I buried me grandmother twice. Season before last me fadder broke both his legs. I remember dat 'cause de boss found out he has only had one leg for eight years. Last season me brudder died, and me mudder was took down with hay fever. De boss looked leary at dat last, 'cause he said April was a h—l of a time to have de hay fever. Well, Mol-

ly, it's a shame to do it, 'cause I likes yer, but on de openin' day you has got to be a unselfish sister and git somethin' an' git it bad.—Exchange.

Medical experts are baffled. They have failed ignominiously to diagnose the fever that infects ball players every spring. "I'm impatient for the fray," is the burden of the correspondence that passes between player and manager. The infected player is over-anxious to handle the bat and spear liners. He can hardly be held in restraint. This is when the fever is at its height before the play begins to circulate regularly. It's never dangerous. The player recovers when the baseball season is advanced a month or two. Then he writes his family: "I'm praying for the wind-up." In July the month of October looks like the best month of the year to a big leaguer. The fever has left him by that time, but it's the same old story next spring.

The Phillies had a stormy passage on the steamer Merrimac, which bore them from Quakertown to their Georgia training grounds. Every member of the party but Backlitsch, Corridon and Ritchie got seasick. Their ship was fogbound for six hours.

President Coniskey has passed approval on a sample uniform for the White Sox, and there will be only a slight change from last season's outfit. The addition of a design similar to the world's championship medals to be placed on the right arm of each player's shirt and coat is practically all the change to be made.

Gene Demont, who will shine on the near side of second this season for Toledo, is due there Monday. In a communique to President Armour, Demontville says he desires to have time to look around for a home for the summer and will require several days to get settled before the team goes to Peoria.

Since President George Dovey of the Boston Nationals has come out so strongly on the matter of adequate uniforms for his club other clubs will have at least three suits next season. There is nothing that has caused more marked comment in recent seasons than the almost filthy appearance of many of the players. There is no more call for such a state of things than there is for the appearance of any athlete in soiled attire. It is a matter upon which the baseball organizations ought to insist.

If all men were to get what they deserved it would be necessary to build a lot more jails.—Chicago News.

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